

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814



November 30, 2000

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE I-113-00

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL COUNTY PROBATION OFFICERS

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- ☐ State Law Changes
- ☐ Federal Law or Regulation Change
- ☐ Court Order or Settlement Agreement
- ☐ Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
- ☒ Initiated by CDSS

SUBJECT: SPECIALIZED CARE RATE SYSTEM AND SPECIALIZED CARE INCENTIVES AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Reference: All County Letter No. 93-85 and County Fiscal Letter No. 00/01-18

The purpose of this All County Information Notice is to remind counties of the program requirements for modification or adoption of a specialized care rate system/plan and to provide general information about the Specialized Care Incentives and Assistance Program (SCIAP). An overview of each program is provided below.

SPECIALIZED CARE RATE SYSTEM

Specialized care is a system that allows a county to supplement the family home basic rate, on behalf of children that require additional care and supervision because of a health and/or behavior problem. The specialized care rate system provides an alternative to group home care, by facilitating the child's placement into a more family-like setting. To be eligible, the child must be in receipt of Aid to Families with Dependent Children-Foster Care (AFDC-FC) and placed in an approved family home or a certified home of a non-treatment foster family agency.

The supplemental payment paid to a provider over and above the family home basic rate for specialized care is referred to as the "specialized care increment." The increment is determined based on the severity of the child's health and/or behavior problem. The specialized care increment combined with the family home basic rate equals the "specialized care rate."

The Specialized Care Rates Program is administered at the local level subject to the approval of the California Department of Social Services (CDSS). Counties wishing to modify or adopt a specialized care rate system/plan are required to submit a proposal to CDSS. At a minimum, the proposal must include a written description of the following:

- The current and proposed population to be served including the types of behavior and/or health problems;
- The current and proposed types of facilities utilized;
- Demonstration of cost neutrality to the State General Fund; and
- The county's payment approval process.

A detailed description of the required data elements for county proposals is found in Manual of Policy and Procedures (MPP) 11-401.323.

Following a county's submittal to modify or adopt their specialized care system/plan, CDSS will review the proposed plan and will notify the county in writing whether it was rejected or granted conditional approval. Within one year of the implementation date of the proposal, the county will be required to submit specific documentation as stated in MPP 11-401.34, to demonstrate that the proposed AFDC-FC payments have not increased cost to State General Fund. The Department will grant final approval of the county's plan contingent upon the county's demonstration of this cost neutrality.

Proposals should be directed to:

**California Department of Social Services
Foster Care Program Development Bureau
744 P Street, M.S. 19-71
Sacramento, California 95814**

Counties are not eligible for State/federal reimbursements for the operation of a specialized care system/plan that has not received approval by the Department.

SPECIALIZED CARE INCENTIVES AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The SCIAP is a program that provides State General Fund to counties for incentives and assistance in the area of specialized care. Funds are allocated annually and computed using an amount equal to five percent of the estimated current fiscal year State General Fund appropriation for foster family homes. Counties receive an allocation based upon their proportionate share of the total AFDC-FC family homes and foster family agency certified home placements for the last 12 months.

To be eligible to receive SCIAP funds for goods or services children must have a health and/or behavior problem. The children must also reside in an approved family home, or a non-treatment foster family agency certified home, and receive an AFDC-FC payment. It is possible for a child to be eligible for SCIAP and not be in receipt of specialized care increments.

Page Three

Expenditures of SCIAP funds are limited to specific goods and services such as respite care, orthodontia, wheelchair ramps, apnea monitors, etc. These goods or services, which are unallowable costs within AFDC-FC specialized care system, must only be provided on a non-recurring or as needed basis. For more specific details, please refer to All County Letter No. 93-85 and County Fiscal Letter No. 00/01-18.

Any questions/inquiries regarding this letter should be directed to the Foster Care Innovative Programs Unit at (916) 324-5809.

Sincerely,

SYLVIA PIZZINI
Deputy Director
Children and Family Services Division